

**YOS MANAGEMENT BOARD CHAIR'S Overview:**

This is the second year in which the Youth Offending Service (YOS) Management Board has formally been a fully accountable sub-group of the statutory Crime and Disorder Partnership (known locally as the Living Safely CPAG). It has expanded its statutory remit beyond overseeing the direct work of the Youth Offending Team, to look at the wider agenda of tackling youth offending, involving all areas of the Tower Hamlets Partnership. This widening of scope is reflected in this year's Youth Justice Plan, which seeks to align the planned work of the YOS with wider partnership work on local priorities (including through the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) the Community Plan refresh and the Local Area Agreement (LAA)). The Management Board has also sought to ensure that the YOT's priorities are reflected in wider service development, for example Children's Service's work with parents and families. There have also been positive learning and developmental aspects of the YOS being fully involved in our preparations for the Joint Area Review (JAR) The Local Area Agreement has given a strong boost to this work by identifying all six Youth Justice Board proposed youth justice targets as objectives.

The Youth Justice Plan for 2008/09 assesses the YOT's performance in 2007/08 and details its plans for the next financial year to meet the targets for the 15 priority themes set by the Youth Justice Board (YJB).

The performance table in the report gives a summary of performance against the 15 KPIs:

- The 2007/08 YOS performance data which relates to the first nine month period of the current financial year (1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> December) on which the 2008-9 Plan is based. A comparison with YOT family borough areas will not be available until the third week of February 2008.
- The 'traffic lights' in the table are allocated by the YJB on a points basis.

The table illustrates progress on performance in the first nine months compared to the previous year. With the exception of First Time Entrants (FTEs) KPI, our performance against all KPI targets has improved from 2006-7. Of most concern are the areas in which the service is showing red, or failing against the KPI targets namely; FTEs, Custodial Remands, Victims participating in Restorative Justice and Parenting support.

Analysis of performance and actions for improvement are as follows;

As an overall issue, the rapidly rising youth population is very significant with the largest growth in youth population in London predicted in the next five years. (According to GLA population predictions, increases of over 14,000 14-18 year olds are predicted by 2010 across the borough)

- It is evident that where the service targets weak performance year on year, although those areas of performance improve, other KPI areas can become vulnerable
- Nowhere in Youth Justice Services is this more evident than in the increase of First Time Entrants (FTE) to the Youth Justice System, and in response we are undertaking detailed examination of the data we have, to determine whether this is as a result of inadequate targeting of young people vulnerable to offending, or poor results of intervention with those that have been identified for preventative or diversionary services thus far. Initial findings suggest that good systems are in place, and good interventions too, but that the wider services of the Local Authority, its statutory partners and those of the voluntary and private

sector need to be better aligned in order to ensure that performance improves

- Custodial Remands: A new target of under 9% of all remand episodes was introduced in April 2007 (from under 30% in the previous year), following a change in the YJB Counting Rules. The percentage figures for 2007-08 and 2006-07 are not therefore directly comparable with one another. Nevertheless the trend over the last year is down quarter by quarter (see Delivery Plan)
- Victims participating in Restorative Justice: A new target of 25% was introduced in April 2007, following a change in the YJB Counting Rules. The percentage figures for 2007-08 and 2006-07 are not therefore directly comparable with one another. The direction of travel over the three quarters from April to December 2007 is positive. Achievement of the target was narrowly missed in the third quarter, and robust systems are in place to ensure that this target is met in the fourth quarter. However, due to the poor performance earlier in the year, the full year cumulative figure may not meet the 25% target.
- Parenting Support: Action to improve this area of performance are in place and involve a concerted corporate approach, outlined in the Delivery Plan for Parenting in Section D of this plan, and centred around working with the families of offenders, the "Think Family" initiative and our efforts in respect of the prevention of re-offending. Again this indicator replaced the previous indicator which measured parental satisfaction with parenting interventions. The target of 20% was introduced in April 2007. The percentage figures for the measure for 2007-08 and 2006-07 cannot be compared with one another. Nevertheless an upward trend can be seen, especially in the figures for prevention work.

#### SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE

Apart from the four KPIs discussed above, seven KPIs have been met; one was not applicable and three were amber indicators which all represent an improvement on last year's performance.

The YJB sets performance targets for YOTs on an annual basis. The targets set for next year will be reviewed to ensure they reflect our local objectives and where necessary, more ambitious targets will be set locally to reflect the priorities assigned to work with children and young people in Tower Hamlets.

We continue to demonstrate improvement in the quality and effectiveness of our practice in the ratings achieved in the first four areas to be assessed through the Effective Practice Quality Assurance (EPQA) process. The implementation of our improvement plans has resulted in an improved rating of '3' for Resettlement. Of the EPQA areas inspected in 2006, Substance Misuse and Remand management, we achieved a rating of 3 and 2 respectively. In relation to the Substance Misuse area, the London Regional Monitor commented as follows "The service provided by the YOT to young people with SM needs is of a very good level." In respect of the Remand management area, the London regional monitor said, "The validation visit confirmed both the positive work already delivered by the YOT for young people on bail/remand as well as areas for development already identified by the team. The plan proposed by the YOT is quite detailed and consistent with the identified areas for further development."

The delivery plan proposals will be catered for within the 2008/09 budget, which is anticipated to grow slightly with inflation from the 2007/08 budget. However, some areas of work will be determined following the allocation of the new Area Based Grant, which replaces many current funding streams, Children's Fund, Stronger Communities Fund (SSCF), Borough Command Unit Fund (BCU), Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, or other grant streams. Those areas have been prioritised.

### Key Objectives for 2008/09

The YOT's priorities for action next year have been set following consideration of:

- Areas for improvement identified by assessment of performance. This highlights as strategic issues parenting interventions, victim work, education, employment and training and over-use of custody
- Strategic Partnership priorities, in particular the Community Plan Refresh, LAA objectives CYPP priority outcomes; and
- Partnership priorities in tackling youth offending, as identified through consultation on the YJ plan with CPAG, the YOT Management Board and more widely with partners, including the third sector.

Accordingly, the YOT Management Board has identified key priorities for the delivery plan (outlined in Section 5 of the report)

We will continue to develop the structures for planning, management, delivery and evaluation of work on the coming year's agenda to ensure the activity of the YOT is effectively coordinated with other partnership work, particularly around the CYPP. This includes responding to the "localisation agenda": ensuring that services respond to local needs, and contributing to the Council's Local Priority Initiatives.

The priorities outlined in this plan are part of a new thrust from Youth Offending Services to engage with the families of offenders and to expand our targeted early intervention work in partnership with other areas of Children's Services and our statutory partners. It is an approach that will have some immediate effect but the impact on youth crime is expected to only be fully realised over a ten year period. In order to achieve our aims we need interventions for children and young people of all ages which clearly cannot be provided by the YOS alone.

As part of the Local Priority Initiatives, in order to reduce and decrease this rate of criminalisation which apart from the damage to victims and community life, is deeply detrimental to the welfare of the offender, threatening family breakdown, disrupting education and damaging prospects of employment and weakening positive factors in a young person's life, we aim to establish a priority referral system for the children in offenders families, the siblings of young offenders, parenting support for their parents, and for the children of adult prisoners. We are developing closer links with inclusion work in Children's Services, broadening our early identification capacity, for example through assessment and referral of the children of adult prisoners, and aim to establish localised initiatives in conjunction with the Local Area Partnership co-ordinators.

We will establish a Commission to explore what can be done to improve the public safety of young people in Tower Hamlets. It will sit for a three month period and hear information from all agencies with information to give, and services to provide, it will consult with young people themselves via the Youth Parliament and other youth fora, and produce a plan for the way forward which will secure the commitment and engagement of all concerned. This will help the YOS and its partners focus on youth gangs and violence. Most of the victims of these crimes are other young people, and they are territorial and divisive.

The YJ Plan therefore, in addition to the performance indicators for the 15 YJB performance areas, will contribute to the delivery of the following strategic objectives:

- All of the CYPP priority outcomes, but in particular: Staying Safe, Making a Positive Contribution and Achieving Economic Wellbeing
- LAA priority outcomes, especially those of the Safer Stronger Communities block, in particular

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Reducing Youth Violence, Tackling ASB and the associated LPSA targets.

- The Community and Strategic Plans, in particular the following key themes of Tower Hamlet's Community Plan: "A Supportive and Safe Community", "One Tower Hamlets", and "A Prosperous Community".
- The Crime and Drugs Reduction Strategy

Overall, partnership and strategic planning for all aspects of work with vulnerable children and young people in the Borough have never been stronger, and we anticipate that the YOT's performance will benefit from the strong preventative partnerships in place during the coming year.

**Dr Kevan Collins, Chair of Tower Hamlets and City of London YOS Management Board,  
Corporate Director of Children's Services**